St. John's University

M.S. Physician Assistant Program

Didactic Program Guidelines
September 2026

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Future Healthcare Leaders,

Welcome to St. John's University PA Program and congratulations on beginning your journey in medicine. This Program marks the beginning of an incredible personalized adventure where you'll learn, grow, and make a lasting impact on the world. Embrace every opportunity to expand your knowledge, engage scholarship and service, connect with peers, and cultivate your passions.

Welcome aboard!

- The St. John's PA Program Faculty and Staff

The Didactic Guidelines are a guide to the academic and professional policies and procedures of the didactic (first two program years) phase of St. John's University M.S. Physician Assistant (PA) Program. This document is distributed to new, incoming students and reviewed as necessary. The Guidelines should be used by students in conjunction with the St. John's University Graduate Student Bulletin accessible at:
https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/academic-resources/bulletins/graduate-bulletin

The Physician Assistant Didactic Guidelines are the official document for the most current Program requirements. The Didactic Guidelines, Clinical Guidelines, and information published on the Program website collectively constitute the official source of Program policies and procedures.

These Guidelines are the administrative document for the Program. University guidelines will not supersede Program guidelines. Students are required to familiarize themselves with this document, and are responsible for knowing and fulfilling all requirements stated. Additionally, students should refer to individual course syllabi for specific course requirements.

Through continuous critical and dynamic self-assessment, the Program identifies and implements necessary changes to maintain the highest possible standards as outlined in the *"Standards and Guidelines for an Accredited Program for the Physician Assistant, 6th Ed."* (*Effective 09/2025*):
https://www.arc-pa.org/entry-level-program/accreditation-standards/

The administration reserves the right, whenever advisable, to amend policies, payment schedules and fees, withdrawal policies, and any course/rotation or degree. Such changes will apply to students already registered in the Program as well as incoming students. Students will be advised in writing of changes. These Guidelines do not constitute an enforceable contract, nor do they set forth contractual obligations owed by the University to its students. The Program reserves the right to interpret, apply, and enforce its policies and procedures in a manner consistent with accreditation standards, patient safety, professional expectations, and the educational mission of the University.

Program policies apply to all students, principal faculty, staff and the Program Director regardless of location. (A3.01)

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MISSION STATEMENT: *INTEGRATING VINCENTIAN TRADITION & VALUES*

https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/programs/physician-assistant-master-science

The St. John's University Physician Assistant Program utilizes a student-centered approach to provide learners with the necessary academic, clinical, professional, and interpersonal skills to function competently, confidently, compassionately, and efficiently as health care practitioners. Students are sensitized to the diversity of healthcare needs and the impact of socioeconomic factors on healthcare to promote non-discrimination and inspire graduates to provide high-quality, cost-effective, compassionate, and accessible care to underserved patients in urban communities.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Prepare students with the requisite medical knowledge, competencies, and skills to provide holistic patient care.
2. Foster interpersonal and communication skills enabling students to participate as effective members of the healthcare team.
3. Cultivate an environment that promotes a commitment to provide culturally responsive care to underserved communities and diverse populations.
4. Enhance and develop student's attributes of professionalism.

PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

The *Competencies for the PA Profession* are designed to define the "specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that physician assistants (PA) in all clinical specialties and settings in the United States should be able to demonstrate throughout their careers." The competencies were first outlined by the Cross-Org Competencies Review Task Force, with representation from each of the four national PA organizations — the *NCCPA, ARC-PA, AAPA* and *PAEA*. The St. John's PA Program has used these to guide the development of the Program's competencies required for entry-level PA practice.

1. Medical Knowledge

1a. Demonstrate current knowledge about basic and clinical health sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care, disease prevention, diagnosis, and management.

1b. Demonstrate knowledge of the anatomy and physiology, disease etiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, differential diagnoses, management, and appropriate interventions for general medical and surgical conditions.

2. Interpersonal and Communication Skills

2a. Demonstrate organized and clear interpersonal, verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals.

3. **Patient Care**

3a. Integrate an appropriate contextual patient history, physical examination findings and appropriately order diagnostic tests for patient assessment to form a differential diagnosis.

3b. Provide individualized effective patient-centered assessment and care to diverse populations that is safe, evidence-based, culturally competent, and equitable.

3c. Counsel and educate a patient effectively.

3d. Explain the role of all members of the healthcare team and demonstrate collaboration to provide the highest quality of care.

4. **Clinical Reasoning and Problem Solving**

4a. Utilize investigative, problem-solving, evidence-based decision making, and critical analysis in clinical situations.

4b. Exhibit fundamental skills in self-directed learning and self-awareness to identify strengths, improvement goals, address deficiencies, and recognize limits in knowledge and expertise.

5. **Clinical and Technical Skills**

5a. Demonstrate ability to obtain a medical history and perform a physical examination.

5b. Safely and effectively perform medical, diagnostic, and surgical procedures considered essential for the practice specialty.

6. **Professional Behaviors**

6a. Adhere to ethical and legal principles and standards of care that govern the medical profession and the delivery of healthcare.

6b. Demonstrate compassion, empathy, integrity, and respect for others and accountability to patients, society, and the profession.

MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION AND MATRICULATION (*ADDENDUM A*)

Please refer to: https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/programs/physician-assistant-master-science

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

St. John's University Registrar Office provides service and support to students including registration, maintenance of student records and transcripts. ****To advance to the next semester, students must fulfill all financial obligations to the institution and must fulfill all requirements for eligibility for progression** (see "*Progression Criteria*").

TUITION AND COSTS

The most updated tuition and costs for the PA Program can be viewed at:
https://www.stjohns.edu/admission/tuition-and-financial-aid/tuition/2024-25-estimated-annual-cost-attendance

****PLEASE NOTE: Students must have a car in their clinical year in order to be able to travel to clinical rotation sites that are not accessible through public transportation.**

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE AND TUITION REFUNDS

The most updated withdrawal and refund information for the PA Program can be viewed at:
https://www.stjohns.edu/admission/tuition-and-financial-aid/tuition/withdrawals-and-credits
Didactic program withdrawal dates coincide with the *STJ Graduate Student Bulletin*.
Consultation with the financial aid office and bursar regarding financial liability is strongly recommended prior to initiating a withdrawal.

Students considering withdrawal should seek advice from the Associate Dean and the Physician Assistant Program Director. **Students are NOT be permitted to withdraw partially from the Program (i.e., from any one course without withdrawing from the Program). If a student wishes to withdraw for any reason, they MUST withdraw from the Program entirely.** If a student withdraws from the Program for any reason other than a health-related leave, they forfeit their seat and will need to re-apply to the Program if they wish to return the following year. All students who wish to return from a health-related leave will be permitted to return to the Program *only on a seat-availability basis*.

ADMINSTRATIVE PRACTICES AND POLICIES

PROGRAM ORIENTATION

The PA Program provides a professional orientation which includes but is not limited to: review of the St. John's University PA Program Guidelines, meeting administration, faculty and staff, academic advisors, and fellow students; and introducing and reviewing requirements and expectations for participation in the didactic and clinical years. Program orientation is mandatory to attend. Unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Student membership in the ***American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)*** and the ***New York State Society of Physician Assistants (NYSSPA)*** is strongly encouraged.
Additionally, students are encouraged to become active members in the *Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants* (SAAAPA). Students are an invaluable component to the development and future of the PA profession, and it is through these organizations that students can remain currently apprised of the progress and

current issues inherent to their chosen field. Participation in these organizations provides an avenue for professional growth in various services, meetings & conferences.

**Student membership offers scholarship opportunities which are also available, on a competitive basis, through both of these organizations.

For further information:

https://www.aapa.org/member-central/ and http://www.nysspa.org/membership/index.html

ST. VINCENT HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

St. Vincent Health Sciences Center, is a testament to the University's unwavering commitment to its Vincentian Mission, inspired by the legacy of St. Vincent DePaul, and to excellence in education and research. This state-of-the-art facility has been meticulously designed to provide an innovative and inspiring environment for all members of our academic community. With three floors and close to 70,000- ft^2 of space, the St. Vincent Health Sciences Center offers a wealth of resources and opportunities for learning. The three-story open atrium allows filtered sunlight to illuminate the building creating an energy-efficient indoor environment reducing carbon emissions and promoting health benefits such as improved mood, natural regulation of circadian rhythm, and enhanced cognitive function.

The student lounge spaces surround the atrium (the interconnecting flow and energy of the building), creating a welcoming environment for open interaction with students and faculty, surrounded by stunning views of the campus. The front entrance opens to the SVHSC Plaza and overlooks the Great Lawn. The rear of the building faces Residential Village which features a second story 3,200 square foot terrace. The terrace offers the campus community outdoor study and team collaboration, as well as dining space for every day and special University events.

New, modern medical suites are specifically designed to provide students with hands-on experience to mimic their future career experience. Additional building highlights include:

- Five high fidelity suites for students to engage with computerized simulation manikins
- A dedicated flex-skills lab fully equipped with the latest technologies
- A virtual reality seminar room promoting innovative education, including simulation training, enhanced visualization, and experiential learning
- Modern-day classrooms offering ideal settings for collaborative learning and academic excellence
- *St. John's is Green!* As one of the premier geothermal facilities in this region, we take pride in our commitment to sustainable energy. There are 66 geothermal wells each delving 500 feet into the earth. This provides 100% of the heating and cooling for the building, making the SVHSC the most energy efficient building on campus.

BUILDING HOURS

St. Vincent Health Sciences Center is open on Monday through Friday from 7:00am-11:00pm and on Saturday and Sunday from 7:00am-8:00pm. Access to the building requires a STORM-CARD for entry.

STUDY SPACES

Students are encouraged to study spaces located throughout the St. John's University campus. These study spaces include:

- HSC 101, HSC102, HSC 117
- Health Education Resource Center (HERC) – Lourdes Hall
- D'Angelo Center (DAC)
- St. Augustine Library

Some study spaces must be reserved in advance and/or may have time limits. The hours of operation are available based on the site reserved. Please find below the link for reservations for the following study spaces:

- HSC: https://outlook.office.com/owa/calendar/HSCStudySpace@mystjohns.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/
- HERC: https://www.stjohns.edu/libraries/help-services/health-education-resource-center-herc

FOOD SERVICE

https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/new-york-locations/queens-residential-campus/dining-services

The first floor of SVHSC is equipped with modern vending machines. To better accommodate the SVHSC community, the updated Market Café located on the side of Montgoris Hall near gate 6, will now be opened at 8:00am on weekdays, serving a variety of coffee and breakfast items, along with a robust grab and go selection for lunch and dinner options.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY AND EMAIL COMMUNICATION

It is required that all students **MUST** have a working computer with reliable internet service, a microphone, and a webcam. It is required that all students **MUST** have an STJ email account, and that the account is checked daily for announcements from the Program. All email(s) sent from the Program will be sent only to STJ email accounts. Emails sent to the PA faculty from accounts other than the STJ email account may not be acknowledged.

LIBRARY SERVICES

The St. John's PA Program offers a vast amount of readily available library resources for students online and in the main library. Textbooks and resources available online through *Access Pharmacy*.

Please refer to: https://www.stjohns.edu/libraries

PARKING

All students that wish to park in a STJ campus parking lot require a parking permit.

For parking permit inquiries please refer to:

https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/public-safety/parking-program

Students participating in hospital or clinical site activities must honor the parking policies of the facility.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

University closings are broadcast on WCBS 880 AM and WINS 1010 AM; announcements are also available through the STJ Emergency Text Messaging System:

https://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/human-resources/policy-1033-emergency-text-and-voice-messaging

As per University policy, if the University closes the campus due to a weather-related reason, classes that can do so should move to remote instruction, synchronously or asynchronously. Classes that cannot be delivered remotely must make up the instructional time

STUDENT WELLNESS, MENTAL HEALTH AND COUNSELING SERVICES (A3.07)

The Center for Counseling and Consultation and confidential counseling services are available to all students: https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/health-and-wellness/center-counseling-and-consultation

If you are in distress, you may also contact:

- **On-Campus Public Safety:**
  - Queens Campus Public Safety: 718-990-5252
  - Staten Island Campus Public Safety: 718-390-4487
- **Off-Campus Resources:**
  - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or dial 988
  - Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741741
  - Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988 (Press 1)
  - NYC 988 (formerly *NYC Well*): Talk. Text. Chat. – Call or Text 988 https://access.nyc.gov/programs/nyc-988/

In the event of an emergency, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

Please note: Program faculty including the Program Director, Medical Director and principal faculty, shall not participate as health care providers for students in the Program at any time, except in an emergency situation while waiting for 911 assistance (A3.06)

UNIVERSITY HARASSMENT, MISTREATMENT, DISCRIMINATION, SUBSTANCE ABUSE and DISABILITIES POLICY

Please refer to the St. John's website and/or the University Student Handbook:

https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/student-success/student-conduct/policies

https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/title-ix

https://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/human-resources/policy-806-drug-and-alcohol-policy

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POLICY

PA students are not permitted to work for the Program (A3.02) except for tutoring services which are vetted and cleared by the College's Academic Success Center. PA students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty, clinical or administrative staff at any time (A3.03).

For more information, see https://www.stjohns.edu/resources/places/academic-success-center

Students are strongly discouraged to maintain any type of employment during the course of program study. Program responsibilities are not negotiable and will not be altered due to work obligations.

STUDENT RECORDS AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS STANDARDS (A3.09)

All students must demonstrate proof of personal health insurance at the time of admission and maintain this insurance throughout their didactic and clinical years.* Additionally, students must provide evidence of a complete health history and physical examination, laboratory tests, proof of immunity, documentation of the Covid-19 vaccine(s) and annual influenza immunization. This information needs to be updated in StudentCheck, a college health electronic health record system utilized by St. John's, ***annually or more often, as required by clinical rotation sites. *Please note: health requirements listed in StudentCheck may change while transitioning from the second didactic year to the clinical year and it will be required to abide by the identified clinical year health requirements at that time.

Additionally, health items listed in the University health portal, Medicat: (https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/health-and-wellness/student-health-services/online-patient-portal) must be uploaded as well in order to achieve a compliant status.

The PA Program requires that all students meet certain health and immunization requirements in accordance with both current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for healthcare providers and the St. John's University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences student requirements:

https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-adults/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/index.html#other

https://www.cdc.gov/acip/vaccine-recommendations/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/recommendations.html

Students must provide documented medical clearance within StudentCheck. **Medical clearance is required to participate in the didactic classes and to engage in clinical experiences**. Students missing class due to lack of medical clearance are responsible for all missed work and/or examinations during that time. Failure to comply may result in withdrawal of acceptance or when applicable, removal from the classroom or clinical site.

Student health forms will be kept on file in StudentCheck. All students are encouraged to keep personal copies of all health information. All students may request copies of written health clearance and immunization forms. *All health records provided will be kept strictly confidential*.

Students are responsible for all costs associated with required health examinations, immunizations, laboratory testing, health insurance, background checks, drug screening, transportation, and any additional requirements imposed by clinical education sites unless otherwise specified by the University.

EXPOSURE TO INFECTIOUS AND ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS (A3.05)

Maintaining *OSHA Standards*, all PA students receive training and certification regarding the control, prevention and management of blood-borne pathogens and other biological hazards prior to any didactic activities that place students at risk (i.e., venipuncture) and before any clinical rotations. Universal precautions must be followed in all healthcare settings including lab sessions. For preventive measures in laboratory settings, students must dress appropriately and wear protective gloves, lab coats, gowns, face shields/goggles and tie their hair up as directed by teaching faculty during lab sessions where they may encounter exposures. If students are exposed to any substances that may cause harm (for example, blood/body fluids and needle sticks during clinical rotations), they must fill out an incident report on site and seek medical treatment immediately at their clinical site (or if on campus, seek treatment at an urgent care or local clinic or hospital). Students shall incur any cost at their expense in these cases where outside medical treatment is sought/required.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND READMISSION PROCEDURE

The Program does not offer voluntary deceleration outside of an approved leave of absence process. Students seeking a voluntary medical or personal leave of absence must contact the Dean's office. In order to assist with the procedure, you may choose to consult with the Office of the Dean and Program Director. Further procedure should be consistent with the STJ Graduate Bulletin. All students who wish to return from a leave of absence must be cleared by all required health care or other providers as well as the Associate Dean. **Return to the Program is not guaranteed and will be permitted only on a seat-availability basis.** For time to program completion, the maximum time frame cannot exceed 150% of the published length of the Program.

STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS

For requests regarding transcripts please refer to: https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/office-registrar

ATTIRE AND IDENTIFICATION

St. John's University photo identification badges **MUST** be carried on your person when attending classes or any Program event on campus and must be available for inspection. Photo identification badges **MUST** be *worn conspicuously* at all hospital and clinical sites. PA students must be clearly identified in the clinical setting to distinguish them from other health profession students and practitioners (A3.04). Loss of an ID badge must be immediately reported to the Program and Public Safety and a new ID obtained at the student's expense.

When attending classes or any Program event, students are expected to be well-groomed, dressed in professional attire or navy blue scrub uniform, and observe customary standards of personal hygiene. Personal appearance is extremely important in facilitating acceptance by patients, patient advocates and other healthcare professionals and establishing patient confidence and trust, particularly for a clinician with limited experience. The PA Program dress code policy is in effect as described above, throughout the didactic and clinical years.

- Once received, short, white, clean consultation jackets with Program patch and rocker attached to the left sleeve may be worn to class daily but are not required in the didactic years.
- *Professional Dress*: Dress pants and/or knee length or longer skirts with collared shirts or blouses for all students. Males are required to wear a tie of their choice. Socks or stockings and shoes are to be worn at all times. Slippers, flip-flops, or sandals are not permitted. Shoes must cover the entire forefoot. Scrubs (top and bottom; navy blue only) and clean sneakers are acceptable class wear.
- Students should consider the image projected to the patient and others with regard to hairstyle and length. Neatly trimmed beard and moustaches may be worn. Long hair needs to be secured away from the face in all laboratory or clinical settings.
- Excessive or loose jewelry is a safety risk for students and the patient; and their use is discouraged during any lab or clinical site participation.

**Head coverings are permitted as per the University Equity and Inclusion policies:
https://www.stjohns.edu/equity-and-inclusion

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS POLICY

In the didactic years, prompt, regular attendance is ***EXPECTED*** for all scheduled lectures and is **MANDATORY** for all laboratory sessions. Attendance and punctuality in the classroom are indicative of students' level of professionalism and future clinical practice reliability. **Any student who demonstrates a lack of professionalism with regard to attendance and/or tardiness may receive individual advisement by faculty and/or course coordinators.** Excessive absences, even if individually excused, may be referred to ASPC when they interfere with achievement of course objectives, demonstration of competency, required laboratory participation, professional development, attendance reliability, or progression requirements. Determination of whether absences are excessive shall be made by the Program based upon the totality of circumstances.

Attendance and lateness may be monitored by course coordinator(s) or individual instructors and may be used to determine the final course grade as indicated in individual course syllabi. Any attendance, participation, professionalism, pop quiz, in-class activity, or similar component contributing to the final course grade must be specifically described in the course syllabus, including the method by which points are earned or deducted.

Course instructors reserve the right to conduct pop quizzes and course work that will not be made-up during the remainder of the course which may impact course final grades. Course instructors reserve the right to refuse classroom admission to students who arrive late when such admission would disrupt the educational environment. Such determinations are made at the instructor's discretion and do not excuse the student from responsibility for missed instructional material, assignments, assessments, or other course requirements. All missed course-work is the responsibility of the student. Students who are absent from or arrive late to class, including for approved religious observance, remain responsible for all course content, announcements, activities, and assignments missed during the class session. Consistent with the University's designation for in-person education, class sessions will not be recorded by faculty. Faculty are not required to provide make-up lectures or individualized lecture notes.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURE FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHEDULED LAB

In preparation for the level of professionalism and dependability required in clinical practice, a student who will miss ***any or all of a scheduled lab day*** must notify the course coordinator (via email or phone) ***before the start*** of the event. Missed labs may require make-up assignments. Demonstration of proficiency in each missed lab session during the didactic years will be required.

- ***Excused absence:*** an absence in which the student notifies the Program before the start of the scheduled activity; medical exemptions require documentation on official letterhead with signature
- ***Unexcused absence:*** any absence in which the student does not notify the Program before the start of the scheduled activity or if the student leaves early and misses classes without notification

Bereavement: unanticipated absence due to family illness, accident or death will be excused provided that the student notifies the Program on the day of the incident, or as immediately as possible. Students are granted 3 days bereavement leave in the event of the death of a parent, parent-in-law, spouse, child, sibling, grandparent or equivalent family relationship.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURE FOR ABSENCE FROM EXAMINATIONS

A student that is late or absent for any Program examination ***must*** e-mail the ***course coordinator*** before the exam begins. Students requesting absence due to religious observance must notify the course coordinator(s) in advance to be granted an excused absence. Otherwise, an excused absence from an examination requires that the student present a valid health care provider's note on letterhead **for the date of the absence** upon return.

Any examination missed due to an ***excused*** absence will require a make-up examination. The format, content, timing, and scheduling of the make-up examination shall be determined by the course coordinator. Make-up examinations are not required to be identical in format or content to the original examination.
Without a dated note, the absence will be considered ***unexcused***. Any examination missed due to an ***unexcused*** absence will result in a "0" for that exam.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

Students are required, always, to abide by academic, clinical and professional behavior policies in line with the St. John's University Student Code of Conduct and the *PA Code of Ethics* (see ***Addendum B***).
https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/student-success/student-conduct

The PA student will consistently demonstrate: ethical conduct, integrity and honesty, concern for others, self and rights of privacy, responsibility to duty, adherence to deadlines, an appearance appropriate to the academic and clinical profession, an ability to recognize one's limitations and accept constructive criticism, punctual attendance at all required Program and clinical activities, respect for patients, their families, faculty, staff and peers, and an individual as well as group responsibility for honorable, ethical behavior. This includes behaviors both inside AND outside class time and clinical rotations. During **ALL** classroom and clinical lectures, student presentations and examinations the student will: **turn off and put away all cell phones and electronic devices which may be disruptive**. In addition, students will arrive promptly at the start of class and when returning from a break and come to class prepared having read any required resource information prior to the lecture.
***For personal or family emergencies during the didactic years, students can be contacted via Ms. Trudy Simone: simoneg@stjohns.edu**

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

- Social networking is a great way to meet new people, stay in touch with old friends and connect with the University community. Visit the University's social media directory to keep up with the latest news on programs and events and to share your thoughts with the community.
- University policies including the student code of conduct, as well as state and federal laws, apply online. You are responsible for what you say and do through social media just as you are in any other circumstances.
- Uphold the program Mission and Values https://online.stjohns.edu/about-us/mission. Respect others and their opinions and engage in civil discourse and discourage any behavior that threatens personal freedom or dignity.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, information you share online can become public. Avoid sharing your address, full birthdate, telephone number, class schedule and passwords. Do not post obscene or tasteless materials. Think about your future. An increasing number of admissions officials and employers consider candidates' social media activities in making their selections. Online behavior has been used to terminate employees and has been submitted into evidence in legal cases. Be responsible and be careful.

- If you are the victim of harassing or bullying online activities, refer to the Student Conduct page https://www.stjohns.edu/life-st-johns/student-success/student-conduct.
- Students shall not establish or maintain personal social media relationships (e.g., "friends," "followers," or similar connections) with Program faculty or staff while enrolled in the PA Program unless a pre-existing relationship existed prior to matriculation.

PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE/PROBATION

Professional probation is a formal status assigned to a student who has violated one or more standards outlined in the "Student Conduct and Behavior" or "Code of Ethics" section of these *Guidelines*. Students may be referred to the Academic Standing and Progression Committee (ASPC) for review of such violations. The determination of whether conduct constitutes a professionalism violation shall be made by the Academic Standing and Progression Committee based upon the totality of circumstances, documented evidence, professional standards, Program policies, and expectations of the physician assistant profession. Based on its findings, the ASPC may recommend placement on professional probation. In addition to this recommendation, the matter will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean for further review and action as appropriate. Students placed on professional probation will receive written notification of the decision via letter and/or University email within two weeks of the Committee's determination. As part of this status, students may be assigned a structured remediation plan designed to address the identified areas of concern.

Professional probation remains in effect until all assigned remediation requirements have been satisfactorily completed and the student demonstrates acceptable professional conduct, as determined by the Academic Standing and Progression Committee. Removal from professional probation is not automatic and requires formal review and approval by the Academic Standing and Progression Committee. Completion of remediation requirements alone does not guarantee removal from probationary status. **Failure to complete assigned remediation requirements, or any additional violation of professional or behavioral standards while on probation, may result in dismissal from the Program.**

THE DIDACTIC YEARS

The PA Program prepares students both academically and professionally for responsible and competent service as a clinician. Professional learning is cumulative, and students are continually and globally responsible for material already studied. The faculty facilitates student learning with teaching and instructional objectives, learning outcomes and program competencies for self-direction.

As a PA, graduates enter a profession that requires a continued quest for excellence. The facilitation of critical thinking skills is emphasized to encourage continued learning throughout the individual's professional lifetime.

The didactic portion of the Program is presented as an integrated curriculum divided into two years and within each year, a fall and spring semester. Students are expected to complete the designated curriculum in the sequence specified. **Each semester's course work is pre-requisite to the next semester.** There is no opportunity for transfer of credit into the PA curriculum or advanced placement. Students are responsible for the purchase of all required texts and medical equipment.

THE DIDACTIC SCHEDULE:

YEAR ONE: ***FALL SEMESTER – 12 CREDITS***

SJU COURSE #	COURSE NAME
PAE 113	Ethics and the PA Profession
PAE 121	Anatomy, Physiology and Pathophysiology I
PAE 122	Anatomy, Physiology and Pathophysiology I Lab
PAE 114	Evidence Based Medicine
PAE 131	Clinical Medicine 1
PAE 115	Current Topics in PA Practice

YEAR ONE: ***SPRING SEMESTER: 15 CREDITS***

SJU COURSE #	COURSE NAME
PAE 123	Anatomy, Physiology and Pathophysiology II
PAE 124	Anatomy, Physiology and Pathophysiology II Lab
PAE 140	Health History and Physical Diagnosis (HHPD) I
PAE 141	HHPD I Lab
PAE 142	Medical Diagnostics
PAE 132	Clinical Medicine 2

YEAR TWO: ***FALL SEMESTER – 15 CREDITS***

SJU COURSE #	COURSE NAME
PAE 233	Clinical Medicine 3
PAE 234	Clinical Medicine 4
PAE 235	Clinical Medicine 5
PAE 240	HHPD II
PAE 241	HHPD II Lab

YEAR TWO*: SPRING SEMESTER – 12 CREDITS*

SJU COURSE #	COURSE NAME
PAE 236	Clinical Medicine 6
PAE 237	Clinical Medicine 7
PAE 242	Surgical Techniques
PAE 243	Surgical Procedures Lab
PAE 244	Clinical Mastery in Organ Systems: Problem-Based Learning Lab

PROGRAM CO-CURRICULUM

The PA Program co-curriculum shapes the educational journey of students by enriching their learning experience beyond the standard curriculum. It provides opportunities for deeper exploration of specialized topics, enhances critical thinking skills, fosters professional and personal growth, and encourages lifelong learning and adaptation to the evolving field of medicine. The co-curricular requirements will be presented at the beginning of each academic semester. Students who do not complete all co-curricular requirements for a given semester are referred to the Academic Standing and Progression Committee (ASPC) for review and determination of appropriate corrective action, which may include inability to progress in the Program.

POLICY FOR RECORDING OF LECTURES

Students may audio record classroom lectures for their personal educational use unless otherwise prohibited by the course coordinator, lecturer, University policy, or applicable law. Faculty may restrict or prohibit recording of specific lectures, activities, guest presentations, patient-related discussions, small group activities, simulations, laboratory sessions, or other educational experiences when necessary to protect privacy, confidentiality, intellectual property, or the educational environment. Recording of group discussions, student presentations, skills laboratories, simulations, standardized patient encounters, examination reviews, and any activity involving protected, confidential, or sensitive information is prohibited unless expressly authorized by the course coordinator.

All recordings are intended solely for the personal educational use of the student and may not be copied, distributed, posted, uploaded, shared, sold, transmitted, or otherwise disseminated to any individual or entity, including through social media platforms, websites, file-sharing services, artificial intelligence platforms, public forums, or other electronic means, without the express written permission of the lecturer and the Program. Unauthorized distribution or use of recordings may result in disciplinary action and may constitute a violation of University policy, copyright law, privacy laws, or professional conduct standards.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Student performance and competency in didactic courses are assessed by a variety of methods, including but not limited to examinations, case presentations, research papers, and observable skill-based competency evaluations. Examinations during the didactic years are scheduled by course coordinators. The dates are subject to change per the course coordinator. Evaluation may also be based on class participation, preparation, professionalism and attendance. It is the prerogative of the course coordinator to select the specific method(s) of assessment.

Standards of criteria that will evaluate student performance are communicated to students through course syllabi and reviewed at course introduction. It is the student's responsibility to review the course curriculum, course syllabi and grading policies and ask for clarification of any points of concern.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE POLICY

Applies to: All Didactic and Clinical Year PA Students

As artificial intelligence (AI) tools become more integrated into academic and clinical environments, the St. John's University Physician Assistant Program is committed to guiding responsible, ethical, and professional use. This policy sets forth expectations for the use of AI technologies (e.g., ChatGPT, generative AI, translation tools, clinical decision support apps) by PA students.

I. Acceptable Use of AI

AI tools may be used for educational enhancement and non-clinical support under the following conditions:

- **Studying and Concept Review**: Using AI to clarify concepts, summarize readings, or reinforce material learned in class. AI should be used *cautiously* to study/prepare for exams (e.g., allowing AI to create practice exam questions). Validated, reliable practice exam platforms are provided by the program for student use.
- **Writing Support**: Grammar or style suggestions for academic writing, provided all content remains original and properly cited.
- **Professional Development**: Assistance in drafting resumes, personal statements, or mock interview questions.
- **Case-Based Learning (With Faculty Permission)**: Brainstorming differential diagnoses or reviewing evidence-based guidelines, as long as AI is not a substitute for personal clinical reasoning.
- **Patient Communication Practice**: Practicing how to explain complex medical concepts in layperson terms.

II. Unacceptable Use of AI

AI must **not** be used in the following contexts:

- **Academic Integrity Violations**:
    - Submitting AI-generated content as your own on exams, quizzes, written assignments, or presentations.

- Using AI to complete assignments without explicit permission from the course instructor.
- AI can not be used for clinical year elective rotation research papers/manuscripts

- **Clinical Documentation and Assignments**:
  - Using AI tools to write, summarize, or alter patient notes, H&Ps, SOAP notes, clinical portfolio assignments, remediation assignments, or any documentation within an electronic medical record (EMR) without explicit permission from the course instructor.
- **Patient Care Decision-Making**:
  - Relying on AI to generate or validate diagnoses, treatments, or patient recommendations during clinical rotations.
- **Bypassing Learning**:
  - Using AI to avoid critical thinking, self-reflection, or direct engagement with course materials.
- **Inappropriate Communication**:
  - Using AI to send messages, emails, or responses to preceptors, patients, faculty, or staff without reviewing and editing for accuracy, tone, and context.

Violations of academic integrity will be treated as serious breaches of academic conduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including academic probation and Program dismissal.

III. Student Responsibility for AI Output

All students are fully responsible for:

- **The accuracy, appropriateness, and originality of any work submitted**—regardless of whether AI assistance was used.
- **Fact-checking and validating** any AI-generated information before use.
- **Disclosure of AI use** for any and all assignments, assessments, etc.
- **Understanding and complying** with University-wide academic integrity policies.

Please note: AI models may inherit biases from the data they are trained on, which can lead to biased or unfair information.

IV. Confidentiality and Ethical Use

Beware that most AI tools do not ensure the privacy and confidentiality of your data.

Be careful not to violate your privacy or that of any other individual.

Students must **never** input or share:

- **Sensitive or Protected Health Information (PHI)** or any identifying patient data.
- **Confidential institutional or preceptor information**.
- **Details about patients or clinical encounters** that could be linked to a real person.

*Violations of confidentiality—whether intentional or due to negligent AI use—will be treated as **serious breaches of professional conduct** and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the Program.*

V. Ethical and Professional Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Uphold the **highest standards of professionalism and academic integrity** in all work—AI use does not diminish ethical responsibility.
- Seek **faculty guidance** if uncertain whether AI use is permissible in a specific assignment or setting. Faculty may require disclosure statements identifying how AI was used.
- Recognize that **developing independent clinical reasoning, judgment, and communication skills** is core to becoming a competent PA.

Policy Review:

This policy is subject to revision as AI tools and practices evolve. Students will be notified of any updates and are expected to remain in compliance throughout their enrollment.

GRADING SYSTEM

The alpha-numeric grading system for each course is documented in the individual course syllabus.

DIDACTIC COURSE AND PROGRAM SURVEY EVALUATION

Throughout the curriculum, students will be asked to evaluate didactic courses, instructors, and various program components (e.g., admissions, sufficiency, effectiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion). These evaluations are an important opportunity for students to provide thoughtful, constructive feedback and are essential for the program's ongoing self-assessment and continuous improvement, including meeting accreditation requirements. Surveys will be distributed to your St. John's University email address via **mspaassessment@stjohns.edu**. As part of the PA Program's co-curricular expectations and ongoing accreditation obligations, **completion of course and program surveys is mandatory**. Student feedback plays a vital role in helping the program identify areas of strength and opportunities for enhancement. Your honest and timely participation is greatly valued and contributes meaningfully to the quality of the PA education experience for current and future students. Failure to complete required course or program surveys by established deadlines may be considered failure to satisfy Program co-curricular requirements and may result in referral to the Academic Standing and Progression Committee for review.

STUDENT FACULTY ADVISEMENT

Each student will be assigned a PA faculty advisor during didactic orientation, who will work closely with the student and be available for guidance. Appointments may be made via email, phone call or drop in as available. The assigned PA faculty advisor ensures timely access and/or referral of students to services addressing personal issues that may impact their attendance, performance or progression in the PA Program (A3.07). A student may not change faculty advisors without the approval of the Program Director.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND PROGRESSION CRITERIA

Academic progression decisions are based upon documented evaluation of student performance. Advancement from one semester, year, or phase of the Program is not automatic. Students must satisfy all academic, professional, technical, health, administrative, financial, and Program requirements before progression may occur. Students are required to achieve a **minimum semester and cumulative grade point average of 3.0/3.0** and to **pass each course** to remain in good academic standing and progress in the Program. **ALL** clinical rotations represent courses within the Program. Additionally, students are required to pass a cumulative competency exam at the end of their second didactic year to progress to the clinical year.

- Students who fail any graduate course with a final grade below C (which is documented as 'F') will not be permitted to re-take the course and will be recommended for dismissal from the Program.
- Any student who successfully passes all courses but fails to meet the minimum GPA requirement at the conclusion of *any semester* in the Program will be referred to the Associate Dean for Health Sciences and placed on academic probation. Academic probation is limited to one subsequent academic semester. Students who fail to satisfy all probation requirements by the conclusion of that semester will be recommended for dismissal.
- A student formerly placed on academic probation:
    - may be removed from probationary status if they meet all requirements for good academic standing in the *subsequent* semester (e.g., achieve a minimum semester and cumulative GPA of 3.0/3.0 and pass each course).
    - will be recommended for Program dismissal if they do not meet all requirements for good academic standing in the *subsequent* semester
- Students who are removed from academic probation are subject to evaluation based on the academic standards listed above and may be placed on a subsequent academic probation in another semester based on performance.

TARGETED EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT DEFICIENCY

Demonstrating competency across instructional objectives and learning outcomes is essential to the successful practice of medicine and progression within the Physician Assistant Program. Targeted Educational Intervention is an educational process designed to identify and address deficiencies in specific content areas, instructional objectives, or learning outcomes demonstrated on an individual assessment. The purpose of the intervention is to promote mastery of course material, strengthen academic performance, and support student success throughout the curriculum. Through targeted review, reflection, and reinforcement of identified areas of weakness, students are provided an opportunity to improve their understanding and achieve program-defined competencies.

- Targeted Educational Intervention is an educational process and does not constitute remediation, academic probation, professional probation, disciplinary action, or course failure.

- Completion of a Targeted Educational Intervention does not alter an individual assessment grade, course grade, semester GPA, cumulative GPA, or final course outcome. Furthermore, completion of the intervention does not affect or influence decisions made through the Program's academic standing, progression, probation, dismissal, or appeals processes.

TARGETED EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT DEFICIENCY PROCEDURES

1. Unless otherwise stated, the Program defines <70% on an individual assessment (i.e., exam) as a deficiency in one or more program-defined instructional objectives or learning outcomes.
2. A mandatory meeting with the *assigned* faculty advisor is **required** for any failed assessment. It is the student's responsibility to contact and/or respond to inquiries from their academic advisors. The student should attend the program examination review and then schedule an appointment with their advisor for an individualized review of the assessment and review of the *ExamSoft Strengths & Opportunities* report.
3. During advisement academic performance will be reviewed, professionalism will be discussed as necessary, and methods to assist the student with learning and test performance will be explored, including referral for additional services. The advisement meeting will address particular deficiencies in instructional objectives, learning outcomes, content knowledge, test-taking skills, and/or study strategies.
4. **At the conclusion of the didactic semester(s),** any student who has failed one or more individual exams within any course will receive from the course coordinator(s) an individualized educational intervention based on their deficiencies. Projects may include but are not limited to: targeted review activities, instructional objective review, case-based exercises, self-reflection, written assignments, AI-assisted learning activities, supplemental readings, practice questions, knowledge assessments, or other educational activities.
5. Intervention activities must be completed by the deadline established by the course coordinator and/or Program. Evaluation for successful completion is performed by the course coordinator(s).
6. Successful completion of all assigned intervention activities is required for progression to the subsequent semester. Failure to comply with defined procedures or to complete projects will result in referral to the Academic Standing and Progression committee (ASPC) and may result in an "Incomplete" final grade designation for affected courses and failure to progress in the Program.

PROGRAM REMEDIATION FOR DIDACTIC YEAR COURSES

The Program has defined and applied processes for addressing deficiencies in a student's knowledge and skills, such that the correction of these deficiencies is measurable and can be documented. Remediation offers targeted support and guidance for students to address areas of weakness or misunderstanding, thereby bolstering their overall knowledge base and clinical skills and promoting successful progression through the didactic phase of the Program. Through personalized feedback, additional resources, and tailored learning strategies, remediation helps students grasp challenging concepts, develop resilience and adaptability in their approach to medical education and promotes a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.

Students are responsible for monitoring their academic performance, responding to Program communications, attending required advisement meetings, and complying with all remediation requirements.

DIDACTIC COURSE REMEDIATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. A student whose semester or overall GPA <3.0 is subject to review by the Academic Standing and Progression committee (ASPC). If the student is able to continue in the Program, the student is assigned remediation procedures.
2. In addition to the above "**Targeted Educational Intervention Procedures**", remediation procedures may include referral for tutoring services, referral to the Academic Success Center, frequent meetings with the academic advisor, referral to Academic Dean, and other resources as indicated.
3. Working with their academic advisor, students will develop an "*Academic Improvement Plan*" with SMART goals, and follow-up their progress during scheduled advisement meetings.

Notes:

- Failure to comply with defined remediation processes will result in referral to the Program Academic Standing and Progression committee (ASPC).
- Completed advisement and remediation documents will be kept in the student's file.

TUTORING

Tutoring services may be available to students through the College's Academic Success Center.
https://www.stjohns.edu/resources/places/academic-success-center

DIDACTIC COMPETENCY EXAMINATION

At the conclusion of the didactic phase, students must successfully complete the Didactic Competency Examination as a requirement for progression into the clinical phase of the Program. **A minimum score of 70% (average of both examination blocks) must be achieved within three attempts.** The examination is based on the current NCCPA PANCE Blueprint and assesses foundational medical knowledge acquired throughout the didactic curriculum. The examination is developed and reviewed by the Program Curriculum Committee and consists of approximately 200 questions administered in two 100-question blocks separated by a scheduled break. Questions are primarily multiple-choice in format, although other item types may be included with no more than 15% fill-in/essay questions. All examinations are administered electronically and are live proctored.

- ***1st attempt***. The initial administration of the Didactic Competency Exam is scheduled during clinical orientation.

- ***2nd attempt***. Students who do not achieve a passing score on the first attempt will be provided a second examination opportunity approximately one week later. Prior to the second attempt, the student must meet with their faculty advisor to review examination performance and identify areas requiring additional study. Following advisement, the student is expected to engage in independent review and preparation prior to the second examination. Students who achieve a passing score on the second attempt will progress into the clinical phase and begin Clinical Rotation 1 as scheduled, provided all other program progression requirements have been satisfied.
- ***3rd attempt***. Students who do not achieve a passing score on the second attempt will **not be assigned to the first regularly scheduled clinical rotation and will experience a delayed graduation date.** The student will complete a structured four-week faculty-guided independent learning experience. Areas of weakness will be identified through review of didactic course performance and prior competency examination results. Educational interventions may include assigned readings, instructional videos, structured learning activities, tutoring, Academic Success Center referral, Academic Dean consultation, faculty mentoring, and other resources deemed appropriate. Students will also be provided access to the Program's PANCE Board Review resources. Upon completion of the four-week intervention period, a third and final examination attempt will be administered. Students who achieve a passing score on the third attempt will be assigned to their first clinical rotation at the next available rotation start date.
- **Failure After Three Attempts.** Failure to achieve a passing score after three attempts demonstrates insufficient foundational medical knowledge for safe progression into clinical education and will result in referral to the Academic Standing and Progression Committee with a recommendation for program dismissal.

***Pending Appeals*:

- **A student pending academic appeal who has earned a final grade of F in *any* didactic course is not eligible to sit for the Didactic Competency Examination while the appeal is under review.**
- A student pending academic appeal who has earned final grade(s) of C or better in *all* didactic courses may be permitted to sit for the Didactic Competency Examination while the appeal is under review.
- Permission to participate in Clinical Orientation, sit for the Didactic Competency Examination, or temporarily engage in clinical activities during the appeal process ***does not constitute*** progression, reinstatement, readmission, successful completion of the didactic phase, or a favorable appeal determination. Such participation is administrative in nature and is intended solely to avoid unnecessary delays should an appeal ultimately be granted.
- Students must satisfy all didactic course requirements, progression requirements, and appeal determinations before official progression into the clinical phase may occur. Successful completion of the Didactic Competency Examination does not supersede or replace successful completion of individual courses or other program requirements. If the appeal is ultimately denied, the student will be immediately removed from any clinical, orientation, or Program activities for which participation was provisionally permitted during the appeal process.

Participation in such activities during the pendency of an appeal shall not create a right to progression, enrollment, academic credit, or continued participation in the Program.

Notes:

- Failure to comply with defined processes will result in referral to the Program Academic Standing and Progression committee (ASPC).
- Completed advisement documents will be kept in the student's file.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PROGRAM DISMISSAL

PA students are trained to take on a great responsibility of patient care and need to demonstrate competency throughout their training.

A student will be recommended for dismissal from the PA Program if the student:

- Is unable to meet or maintain the Program's Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodation
- Fails any course/rotation at any time throughout the Program
- Does not meet all requirements for good academic standing in the *subsequent* semester following academic probation
- Does not successfully pass the competency exam with a score of 70% within three attempts
- Fails to successfully satisfy the terms and conditions of Professional Probation
- Demonstrates recurrent, serious, or unresolved professionalism violations despite counseling, educational intervention, remediation, or Professional Probation.
- Engages in academic dishonesty, unethical conduct, unprofessional behavior, or conduct inconsistent with the ethical and professional standards of the Physician Assistant profession, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, falsification of records, breach of confidentiality, inappropriate patient interactions, harassment, dishonesty, recurrent tardiness or absenteeism, failure to comply with Program policies, or other conduct deemed incompatible with continued enrollment in the Program.

Note: The Program retains discretion to determine whether a professionalism violation is sufficiently serious to warrant counseling, remediation, probation, recommendation for dismissal, or other corrective action based upon the totality of circumstances, documented evidence, and expectations of the physician assistant profession.

DIDACTIC STUDENT GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL PROCESSES

FINAL COURSE GRADE APPEAL

A final course grade appeal must be based upon one or more of the following grounds:

- Mathematical or clerical error in grade calculation;
- Failure to apply grading criteria as published in the course syllabus;
- Arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory assignment of a grade; or
- Failure to follow established Program or University policies that materially affected the final grade.

Disagreement with an instructor's academic judgment, evaluation of performance, examination content, grading standards, or assignment of partial credit does not, by itself, constitute grounds for a grade appeal. Final course grade appeals must be initiated within five (5) business days of final grade posting unless a longer period is required by University policy.

The student should initiate the grievance and appeals process *in the following order*:

1. Course Instructor and/or Course Coordinator
2. Program Director

Any concerns of the Program Director will be referred to the Department Chair, Associate Dean and/or Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences as needed.

ACADEMIC STANDING AND PROGRESSION COMMITTEE DECISION APPEAL

Recommendations for dismissal are subject to review and appeal pursuant to the Program Appeals Process outlined in these Guidelines. Students have the right to appeal decisions made by the Program's Academic Standing and Progression Committee. Appeals must be submitted in writing within three (3) business days of receipt of the decision letter. Appeals shall be addressed to the Program's Progression Appeals Committee and will subsequently be reviewed by this committee. Membership of the Progression Appeals Committee shall exclude individuals who participated in the original Academic Standing and Progression Committee recommendation. Any committee member who participated in the original recommendation under appeal, or who has a conflict of interest regarding the matter, shall recuse themselves from review and voting on the appeal. The Program will attempt to review appeals within ten (10) business days. Final recommendations will be sent to the Dean of the College.

PROGRESSION/APPEALS COMMITTEE DECISION APPEAL

Students have the right to appeal decisions made by the Program's Progression Appeals Committee. The student may choose the final level of appeal as addressed to either the Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences or the College Academic Fairness Board. Such appeals must be submitted in writing within five (5) business days of receipt of the Progression Appeals Committee decision.

STUDENT APPEALS PROCESS

The St. John's University PA Program follows a step-wise process for all academic appeals made by students who fail to meet progression criteria and are recommended for dismissal:

1. The PA Program *Academic Standing and Progression Committee* (ASPC) meets at the conclusion of each semester to discuss the performance and progress of all didactic students. This committee makes a recommendation to the Associate Dean of Health Sciences for any student that does not meet academic progression requirements as stated in the Graduate Bulletin and PA Program Guidelines. The Associate Dean of Health Sciences attends these meetings for informational purposes only, but does not vote.

2. If a student is recommended for dismissal from the Program, they are contacted soon after, via letter stating so, by the Associate Dean of Health Sciences. They are also advised that they have the right to appeal any/all decisions.
3. Student may appeal to the PA Program Progression Appeals Committee. Students may write a letter of appeal and may also appear at the meeting, either in person, or virtually, to make a statement on their own behalf. The letter of appeal is shared by the Associate Dean, with the Committee Chair and the remainder of committee members prior to the meeting to allow them ample time to review the content of the letter.
4. At the Progression Appeals Committee meeting, the Chair reviews the letter content and discussion surrounding the circumstances of appeal among the voting members. The student is then invited into the meeting to make their statement. The committee members reserve the right to ask the student any questions regarding their appeal letter and statement. The student then leaves the meeting. The Associate Dean attends these meetings for informational purposes only and does not vote.
5. Final discussions follow among committee members-Robert's Rules are followed for voting purposes. A final decision is given to the Associate Dean who then communicates the decision to the student.
6. The student then has the right to appeal any Progression Appeals Committee decisions to the Dean of the College. A similar process is followed at this level.
7. The Dean may decide to uphold the decision of dismissal, or may accept the student's appeal, and overturn the decision, allowing the student to progress on academic probation (with terms individually decided, based on the student's circumstances of dismissal).

COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM

For time to completion, the maximum time frame cannot exceed 150% of the published length of the Program.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Physician Assistant Program maintains educational records for each student throughout enrollment in the Program. Records may include, but are not limited to, admissions materials, academic performance records, assessment results, advisement documentation, educational intervention records, remediation records, academic and professional probation records, progression and appeals documentation, professionalism concerns, disciplinary actions, clinical education records, and other materials relevant to the student's educational experience. Documentation generated through advisement meetings, educational interventions, remediation activities, progression reviews, and disciplinary processes becomes part of the student's educational record and may be maintained in the student's file.

Student records are maintained in accordance with University policies regarding record retention, confidentiality, and security. Access to educational records is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), applicable laws, and University policy. Students may review eligible educational records and request amendment of

records in accordance with FERPA and University procedures. The Program reserves the right to maintain documentation necessary to support academic decision-making, progression determinations, accreditation requirements, licensure verification, and other legitimate educational purposes.

DISCLOSURE OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDING

Students should be aware that academic probation, professional probation, disciplinary actions, remediation, professionalism concerns, progression decisions, and other matters relevant to professional fitness may be disclosed by the Program when requested by licensing boards, credentialing bodies, employers, healthcare organizations, postgraduate training programs, or other authorized entities.

The Program may also disclose accurate and documented information regarding professionalism, attendance, punctuality, dependability, communication skills, interactions with patients, faculty, staff, preceptors, and peers, compliance with program policies, and any substantiated conduct concerns when providing recommendations, references, evaluations, or verification of education. Such disclosures will be based on information contained within the student's educational record and made in accordance with applicable laws, accreditation requirements, and University policies.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS ***ADDENDUM A***

https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/programs/physician-assistant-master-science

The St. John's University Physician Assistant Program is committed to preparing competent, ethical, and compassionate physician assistants who are capable of providing safe and effective patient care. In addition to meeting academic requirements, students must possess the cognitive, physical, behavioral, professional, and interpersonal abilities necessary to successfully complete all components of the curriculum and perform the essential functions required of a physician assistant. Technical standards describe the essential abilities and attributes required for admission, progression, and graduation from the Program. These standards are not intended to deter any candidate for whom reasonable accommodation may allow successful participation in the Program. The ability to meet these technical standards is required for participation in didactic, laboratory, simulation, standardized patient, clinical, and community-based educational experiences.

Candidates and students must be able to meet these technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation. Consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and applicable University policies, St. John's University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. Requests for accommodation should be directed through the University's Office of Student Accessibility Services.

Minimum Technical Standards for Admission, Progression and Graduation

1. Observation

Candidates and students must possess sufficient sensory abilities to acquire information through observation, examination, and assessment in a variety of educational and clinical settings. Observation includes, but is not limited to:

- Observing lectures, demonstrations, laboratory activities, simulations, and clinical encounters.
- Accurately observing patients at a distance and close range.
- Identifying visual, auditory, and tactile findings relevant to patient assessment and care.
- Recognizing nonverbal communication, changes in patient condition, and environmental hazards.
- Interpreting information obtained through physical examination and diagnostic testing.

2. Communication

Candidates and students must be able to communicate effectively, respectfully, and professionally with patients, families, faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, and other members of the healthcare team. Communication abilities include, but are not limited to:

- Eliciting and accurately documenting medical histories.
- Explaining diagnoses, treatment plans, procedures, and patient education.
- Participating effectively in individual and team-based learning activities.

- Communicating through verbal, written, electronic, and other appropriate methods.
- Completing timely and accurate documentation in electronic health records and educational platforms.
- Utilizing communication technologies commonly used in healthcare, including telehealth and virtual learning platforms.

3. Motor

Candidates and students must possess sufficient motor abilities to safely participate in educational and clinical activities and to provide patient care. Motor abilities include, but are not limited to:

- Performing physical examination techniques, including inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation.
- Participating in clinical skills training, laboratory activities, simulation exercises, and patient care experiences.
- Executing movements necessary to provide routine and emergency patient care.
- Safely using medical instruments, equipment, and technology.
- Maintaining sufficient physical stamina to participate in classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical activities that may require prolonged sitting, standing, walking, lifting, reaching, or other physical activity.

4. Intellectual, Cognitive, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities

Candidates and students must possess the intellectual abilities necessary to effectively learn, integrate, analyze, synthesize, and apply information in academic and clinical settings. These abilities include, but are not limited to:

- Measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and problem-solving.
- Understanding and applying scientific and medical principles.
- Interpreting information obtained from lectures, readings, patient encounters, diagnostic studies, and medical literature.
- Retrieving, evaluating, and applying information from multiple sources.
- Exercising clinical judgment and decision-making in a timely manner.
- Comprehending spatial relationships and three-dimensional anatomical structures.
- Demonstrating the ability to integrate knowledge across disciplines and apply it to patient care.

5. Behavioral, Professional and Social Attributes

Candidates and students must possess the emotional health, maturity, professionalism, and interpersonal skills necessary to function effectively in academic and clinical environments. Required attributes include, but are not limited to:

- Integrity, honesty, accountability, and ethical conduct.
- Respect for patients, peers, faculty, staff, preceptors, and other members of the healthcare team.
- Sensitivity to cultural, social, economic, and individual differences.
- The ability to establish and maintain professional relationships.

- The ability to receive, process, and appropriately respond to feedback and constructive criticism.
- Adaptability and flexibility in response to changing environments, schedules, responsibilities, and patient needs.
- The ability to manage stress, maintain composure, and function effectively during demanding academic and clinical situations.
- Consistent demonstration of professional behavior consistent with the expectations of the Physician Assistant profession and the mission and values of St. John's University.

Reasonable Accommodation

St. John's University complies with applicable federal and state laws regarding individuals with disabilities and does not discriminate against otherwise qualified individuals on the basis of disability. Candidates and students seeking reasonable accommodations must work through the University's Office of Student Accessibility Services in accordance with University policy. The Physician Assistant Program, its Admissions Committee, Academic Standing and Progression Committee, and other Program committees will evaluate candidates and students based on their ability to satisfy the essential requirements of the Program, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Acknowledgement

All students are required to review and acknowledge these Technical Standards. The signed acknowledgement will be maintained as part of the student's educational record.

ADDENDUM B

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT CODE OF ETHICS

https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf

Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession

(Adopted 2000, amended 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, reaffirmed 2013)

- Physician Assistants (PAs) shall be committed to providing competent medical care, assuming as their primary responsibility the health, safety and welfare, and dignity of all humans.
- PAs shall extend to each patient the full measure of their ability as dedicated, empathetic health care providers and shall assume responsibility for the skillful and proficient transactions of their professional duties.
- PAs shall deliver needed health care services to health consumers without regard to sex, age, race, creed, and socioeconomic and political status.
- PAs shall adhere to all state and federal laws governing informed consent concerning the patient's health care.
- PAs shall seek consultation with their supervising physician, other health providers, or qualified professionals having special skills, knowledge or experience whenever the welfare of the patient will be safeguarded or advanced by such consultation. Supervision should include ongoing communication between the physician and the physician assistant regarding the care of all patients.
- PAs shall take personal responsibility for being familiar with and adhering to all federal/state laws applicable to the practice of their profession.
- PAs shall provide only those services for which they are qualified via education and/or experiences and by pertinent legal regulatory process.
- PAs shall not misrepresent in any manner, either directly or indirectly, their skills, training, professional credentials, identity or services.
- PAs shall uphold the doctrine of confidentiality regarding privilege of patient information, unless required to release such information by law or such information becomes necessary to protect the welfare of the patient or the community.
- PAs shall strive to maintain and increase the quality of individual health care service through individual study and continuing education.
- PAs shall have the duty to respect the law, to uphold the dignity of the physician assistant profession and to accept its ethical principles. The physician assistant shall not participate in or conceal any activity that will bring discredit or dishonor to the physician assistant profession and shall expose, without fear or favor, any illegal or unethical conduct in the medical profession.
- PAs, ever cognizant of the needs of the community, shall use the knowledge and experience acquired as professionals to contribute to an improved community.
- PAs shall place service before material gain and must carefully guard against conflicts of professional interest.
- PAs shall strive to maintain a spirit of cooperation with their professional organizations and the general public.

OATH OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

ADDENDUM C

I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty and dedication:

- I will hold as my primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all human beings.
- I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.
- I will recognize and promote the value of diversity.
- I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.
- I will hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
- I will assess my personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve my medical practice.
- I will actively seek to expand my knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.
- I will work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
- I will use my knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.
- I will respect my professional relationship with the physician.
- I will share and expand knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and upon my honor.

* adopted by the *American Academy of Physician Assistants* (AAPA) and *Physician Assistant Education Association* (PAEA)

TEST-TAKING PROCEDURES *ADDENDUM D*

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE EXAM

- *Prior* to examination day, students are responsible for:
    - ensuring that *ExamSoft* and their operating system meet current technical requirements
    - acquiring a loaner (as needed) through the Information Technology kiosk
    - downloading examination files to their device
- Failure to accomplish the above in advance does not constitute grounds for delayed testing time, examination rescheduling, or additional examination time.
- Students are responsible for arriving with a fully charged laptop and a functioning power cord. Lack of battery power does not constitute grounds for additional examination time.
- Consistent with the College's examination and electronics policies, cell phones and any other electronic devices capable of recording, transmitting, receiving, storing, or displaying information are ***prohibited*** during examinations. This includes smart watches/glasses, AI-enabled eyewear, recording glasses, camera-equipped eyewear, earbuds, smart jewelry, augmented reality devices, and any other wearable technology. Students may be required to remove or surrender any item reasonably suspected of containing prohibited technology.
- **Students may not wear a watch during exams.** Electronic examination software displays a timer.
- All electronic devices must be turned off and placed in the student's bag at the front of the room prior to the examination. If a cell phone or other prohibited electronic device is noted by a faculty member to be on a student's person or under their control during an examination, a grade of "0" will be assigned for that examination.
- During an examination, unless permitted for religious accommodation, students may not wear hats, scarves, bags, sweatshirts, coats, or jackets (other than a short white consultation coat when applicable). All bags, notes, books, and personal belongings must be placed at the front of the room.
- Students will be randomly assigned a seat for each examination through a process determined by the proctor.
- **Privacy shields/cubicles will be utilized during all examinations**. Students may not move, alter, remove, exchange, write on, or otherwise interfere with privacy shields.
- Students are expected to be seated and ready to begin their examination prior to the designated start time. Please arrive at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the examination to accommodate building entry procedures and complete all required examination preparation activities.

EXAMINATION CHECK-IN AND START

- A student is considered "on time" only if the student has:
    - Entered the classroom;
    - Placed all notes, books, bags, coats, and other personal belongings at the front of the room;
    - Turned off all electronic devices and placed them in a bag at the front of the room;
    - Collected a whiteboard, marker, and eraser if provided;
    - Received a seating assignment, if applicable; and
    - Been seated with their laptop ready to begin the examination at the scheduled start time.

- A student is considered "late" if any of the above requirements have not been completed by the scheduled examination start time.
- Students who are not "on time" will be escorted from the classroom and instructed to wait in a designated area outside of the classroom.
- Students arriving late will be subject to a **mandatory fifteen (15) minute waiting period** before entering the examination room. During the waiting period, students should prepare their laptop and open ExamSoft to minimize delays upon entry.
- Examination passwords will be distributed only after examination security procedures have been completed and students have been instructed to begin.
- The official examination start and end times are determined by the faculty proctor. Examination software timers do not supersede official examination times.

DURING THE EXAMINATION

- No questions may be asked regarding examination content. Proctors will not provide clarification, definitions, interpretation, or assistance regarding examination content. Questions related to technical or software issues should be directed to a proctor immediately.
- Students may not communicate with other students once the examination has begun, including after completion of the examination.
- Only beverages in covered, spill-resistant containers are permitted during examinations. Food, candy, gum, and other beverages are prohibited unless approved through an official accommodation process.
- During the didactic year, students may utilize a whiteboard, marker, and eraser provided by the program. Whiteboards may not be written on prior to the official examination start time and must remain visible and adjacent to the student throughout the examination. Whiteboards, markers, and erasers remain the property of the program. A proctor may inspect, erase, relocate, or remove a whiteboard at any time.
- Students are encouraged to use restroom facilities prior to the start of an examination. If a student requests to use the restroom during an examination, students must activate the ExamSoft "Hide Exam" function, remove outerwear, and submit to reasonable examination security procedures. Students may be escorted to the restroom by a same-gender test moderator.
- A faculty member reserves the right to ask a student to empty pockets, remove outerwear, inspect boots, or otherwise demonstrate compliance with examination security procedures at any time during an examination.
- Any cell phone, prohibited electronic device, wearable technology, unauthorized notes, or other prohibited materials found on a student's person, in clothing, or otherwise under the student's control during an examination will result in a grade of "0" for the examination and referral for disciplinary review.
- Faculty proctors reserve the right to relocate a student to another seat, inspect materials, confiscate unauthorized materials and remove a student from the examination room if examination security concerns arise. Such actions do not constitute a determination of guilt and may be implemented while an investigation is conducted. Any unauthorized notes, study materials, electronic devices, or other prohibited items discovered during an examination may be confiscated and retained pending review.

- Any student who accesses an electronic examination outside of the classroom without permission will receive a grade of "0" on that examination.
- In the event of a fire alarm, building evacuation, medical emergency, power outage, or other unforeseen disruption, students must immediately follow all instructions provided by faculty, staff, and emergency personnel. Examination timing, continuation, or rescheduling will be determined by the course coordinator and/or Program Director.

EXAMINATION COMPLETION

- All students must conclude the examination at the scheduled end time regardless of arrival time and regardless of any timer displayed within ExamSoft.
- Once a student has completed an examination, they should remain in their seat and raise their hand to display the ExamSoft green screen completion on their laptop.
- Upon completion of the examination, students are responsible for uploading their examination file as instructed by the proctor. Students experiencing upload difficulties must immediately notify a proctor and remain in the classroom until instructed otherwise. Students may be directed to relocate within the classroom or connect to an alternative network to facilitate upload.
- Once upload is verified by the proctor:
    - **Students must sign out on the official examination attendance sheet before leaving the room**. Failure to sign out may be considered a violation of examination procedures and may result in an academic integrity investigation and disciplinary action.
    - Students may collect their belongings and exit the room
- Students may not remove any examination-related materials, including whiteboards, markers, erasers, seating cards, privacy shields, or any other materials provided by the program.
- Re-entry is prohibited until the examination session has concluded.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

- Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, copying, acquiring examination questions, falsifying records, unauthorized access to examination materials, or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "0" and referral to the Academic Standing and Promotions Committee (ASPC) and Associate Dean for further disciplinary action.

EXAMINATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- Examination procedures may be modified by the Program Director or designee when necessary to address unforeseen circumstances, examination security concerns, technical issues, or emergency situations.

TEST REVIEW PROCEDURES

REVIEW ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS

- Following completion of item analysis by the course coordinator, examination grades and associated performance reports will be released electronically through ExamSoft.
- Students will be notified of the date, time, and location of the scheduled examination review session. Examination review sessions will generally be scheduled during designated Test Block periods.
- Students will be offered one scheduled opportunity to review an examination. The duration of the review session will be determined by the course coordinator based on the length and nature of the examination.
- Failure to attend the scheduled review session constitutes forfeiture of the review opportunity. Additional review opportunities are not routinely provided.
- Students who arrive late will conclude their review at the scheduled end time.
- To access an examination review, students must utilize the original laptop on which the examination was taken and successfully log into the review platform.
- Students may review only their own examination.
- Students will be permitted to review only those examination questions answered incorrectly unless otherwise authorized by the course coordinator.
- Examination review content displayed within ExamSoft may not reflect post-examination scoring adjustments, item removals, accepted alternative answers, or other modifications made following faculty item analysis. Official examination grades reflect all approved scoring adjustments. Any examination modifications will be communicated by the course coordinator during the review process.

REVIEW SESSION RULES

- Examination review sessions will be conducted under the same security procedures utilized during examinations.
- Consistent with the College's examination and electronics policies, cell phones and any other electronic devices capable of recording, transmitting, receiving, storing, or displaying information are ***prohibited*** during examination reviews. In addition to notes, books and study materials, this includes smart watches/glasses, AI-enabled eyewear, recording glasses, camera-equipped eyewear, earbuds, smart jewelry, augmented reality devices, and any other wearable technology. Students may be required to remove or surrender any item reasonably suspected of containing prohibited technology. **Students may not wear a watch during exam reviews.** Photography, screenshots, screen recording, audio recording, transcription software, artificial intelligence tools, note-taking applications, or any method of reproducing, capturing, transmitting, retaining, or reconstructing examination content are strictly prohibited.
- Examination review sessions are intended for review and learning purposes. Faculty are not required to debate, defend, or immediately adjudicate examination item challenges during the review session.
- Once a student exits an examination review session, re-entry is prohibited.

FACULTY AUTHORITY

- Faculty proctors reserve the right to relocate students, inspect materials, confiscate unauthorized items, terminate a review session, or remove a student from the review area if examination security concerns arise.

QUESTION CHALLENGES

- Students who believe an examination question contains an error, lacks a correct answer, contains multiple correct answers, or is otherwise flawed may submit a written challenge to the course coordinator within two (2) business days of the scheduled examination review session.
- Challenges must include supporting rationale and, when appropriate, supporting references. Challenges submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
- The course coordinator's determination regarding examination item challenges shall be final.

VIOLATIONS OF REVIEW PROCEDURES

- Any student who accesses an examination review outside of an authorized review session without permission may be referred to the Academic Standing and Promotions Committee (ASPC) and Associate Dean.
- Any violation of review procedures may constitute an academic integrity violation and result in referral to the Academic Standing and Promotions Committee (ASPC) and Associate Dean for disciplinary review.
- Unauthorized acquisition, retention, transmission, reproduction, dissemination, or sharing of examination content is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, including assignment of a grade of "0," course failure, dismissal from the program, or other sanctions permitted by University policy.

Physician Asssitant Student Attestation

A. Technical Standards

I have reviewed the Physician Assistant Program Technical Standards and, to the best of my knowledge, I do not have any condition (*physical or mental*) which will compromise my ability to perform the duties expected of me as a student in this program. I understand that I must meet these technical standards throughout all components of the program.

B. St. John's University M.S. Physician Assistant Didactic Program Guidelines

I have received an electronic copy of the St. John's University M.S. Physician Assistant Didactic Program Guidelines, have reviewed it in its entirety, fully understand its content and have had all my questions satisfactorily answered. Furthermore, I attest that I understand and agree to comply with all provisions, policies and procedures outlined in the St. John's University M.S. Physician Assistant Didactic Program Guidelines.

As a physician assistant student at St. John's University, I have read, understand and accept all terms of the above statements:

Name (Please print) _____

Date of Birth_____

St. John's ID number (if known) X_____

Signature _____Date _____

CONTENT AND/OR PHOTO RELEASE

I, the undersigned, being over the age of 18, hereby consent to either the use of my written or spoken words and/or the use of my photograph(s) and hereby authorize St. John's University, New York to use or exhibit this material for educational, advertising, recruiting, development, art or artistic purposes within any or all forms of print and/or electronic media without compensation for me.

I also hereby release St. John's University, New York, its trustees, officers, employees and agents from any and all claims, damages, costs and expenses, including but not limited to those arising for libel, slander, invasion of privacy and other claims arising from the use of the above described materials.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name (Print): _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

_____

St. John's University Main Campus Queens

Year: _____